

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 1

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 67

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 1—Relative to Dr. Dalip S. Saund.

[Filed with Secretary of State July 7, 2005.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 1, Bermudez. Dr. Dalip S. Saund.

This measure would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to urge the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee and the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor Dr. Dalip S. Saund, and would urge all Californians to celebrate his birthday each year in recognition of Dr. Saund's outstanding achievements.

WHEREAS, Dr. Dalip S. Saund immigrated to the United States from India at a time when Indian nationals were denied eligibility for American citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Thanks to his initiative and the help of Indians in California and New York, Congresswoman Clare Booth Luce and Congressman Emanuel Celler were convinced to jointly introduce a bill in the United States Congress to allow Indian nationals to become American citizens, and after a long and hard struggle the bill was signed by President Truman on July 3, 1946; and

WHEREAS, Though Dr. Saund had started as a farmhand, he obtained a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, and as a naturalized citizen started taking an active role in the political process of his adopted homeland; and

WHEREAS, In June 1950, he won his first political battle when he ran for and won a seat on the Imperial County Democratic Central Committee; and

WHEREAS, In November 1950, he was elected as a judge in Westmorland due to his exemplary grassroots campaign, but because he had not been a citizen for one full year the judgeship was denied him; and

WHEREAS, In 1952, he ran again for the judgeship against the incumbent and won, serving as judge in Westmorland for four years; and

WHEREAS, In October 1955, Dr. Saund became a candidate for Congress from the 29th Congressional District, facing a highly celebrated opponent who had rich supporters and who was a personal friend of the then President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, With the help of dedicated volunteers, Dr. Saund carried out an intensive campaign of voter registration, passed out thousands of "Saund circulars," visited thousands of homes, and thus made a definite

impact on voters, resulting in the election of the “first native of Asia” to the United States Congress on November 6, 1956; and

WHEREAS, Today, the population of Asian Americans in the United States is in excess of 10 million, and Asian Americans, and particularly Indian Americans, seeking political office invoke Dr. Saund’s name, much the same way as Dr. Saund himself invoked President Lincoln’s name, as a source of inspiration and a worthy role model; and

WHEREAS, November 6, 2006, marks the 50th anniversary of the historic election of Dr. Saund to the United States Congress; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to urge the Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee and the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor the first Asian member of Congress, Dr. Dalip S. Saund; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges all Californians to celebrate September 20 of each year, Dalip S. Saund’s birthday, in recognition of his outstanding achievement as the first native of Asia to be elected to Congress; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee, and to the United States Postal Service.